

Supervisor Pam Slater-Price

District 3 Slate

February 2009

Third District, County of San Diego



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Vice Chairwoman Pam Slater-Price (center) cuts the ceremonial ribbon opening the new \$5.6 million Nature Center at the San Elijo Lagoon Preserve. Joining Slater-Price are (from left): Ranger Susan Welker; Renee Bahl, director of the county Parks and Recreation; Vice Chairwoman Slater-Price; Doug Gibson, executive director of the San Elijo Lagoon Conservancy; and Patrick McDonough, senior parks project manager for the county.

Nature Center Draws Crowd To Its Opening

A long-awaited dream turned into reality when Vice Chairwoman Pam Slater-Price cut the ceremonial ribbon opening to the public the \$5.6 million Nature Center at the San Elijo Lagoon Preserve, a center she made a top priority.

"I have waited so long for this day to arrive," Vice Chairwoman Slater-Price explained to the crowd of more than 200 spectators who turned out for the Jan. 31 dedication. The two-story structure is expected to be the county's first to meet the stringent criteria for "green" buildings, as it features solar power and recycled water in its daily use and was constructed using recycled materials.

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Wall Street Gives San Diego County High Bond Rating

Validating the strong financial leadership and conservative budgeting presented by the elected Board of Supervisors in these tough times, Wall Street's three primary municipal credit rating services gave the County of San Diego straight "A"s for its fiscal performance.

The agencies affirmed San Diego County's strong issuer ratings of AAA (Standard & Poor's), AA+ (Fitch Ratings) and Aa2 (Moody's). Additionally, the three assigned ratings address the county's planned issuance of \$141.7 million in lease revenue bonds for the construction of the new Operations Center in Kearny Mesa: AA+ (Standard & Poor's), AA (Fitch) and A1 (Moody's).

According to Fitch, "(San Diego) County's strong fiscal discipline and high reserve levels should enable it to sustain sound finances despite minimal tax base growth and inevitable reductions in state funding. The county's financial operations remain healthy and leave it well-posi-

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Slater-Price Honored By Anti-Crime Organization

Citizens Against Crime named Vice Chairwoman Pam Slater-Price its Legislator of the Year for her work in combating domestic violence, insisting on strong penalties for offenders, and offering services to victims of domestic violence. She has also funded hideaway homes for victims, and places to keep their pets so the animals do not bear the brunt of revenge, which often happen.

Vice Chairwoman Slater-Price worked closely with the District Attorney and Sheriff's Departments to improve services for victims of family violence. She spearheaded various domestic violence-related projects including the launch of the countywide Domestic Violence Hotline (1-888-DV-LINKS), the opening of the North County Family Violence Prevention Center, and the establishment of the Domestic Violence Fatality Review Committee.

She also promoted "CUT IT OUT," which helps beauty salon professionals refer clients to resources for domestic violence.

More than 27,000 calls have been logged since the hotline debuted five years ago. During that time, incidents of domestic violence have decreased.

County health officials report the number of cases have dropped by 13 percent from 21,756 in 2003 to 18,874 in 2007.

AROUND AND ABOUT IN THE THIRD DISTRICT

News of Note

Warning Issued On Oak Borer

The County of San Diego is joining a multi-agency effort to alert residents of the presence of the highly destructive gold-spotted oak borer, a brown beetle with gold spots on its wings. It has been around in the county for several years, but only recently has a link been established between the beetle and the drought, resulting in the death of thousands of trees.

This beetle is different than typical wood-boring bugs because it does not feed on dead, dying or recently killed trees. It attacks healthy, mature oaks on main stems and large branches. Larvae feed on the underside of the bark, causing strips or patches of the tree to die – eventually killing the entire tree after repeated attacks.



Speed permitting launched

To better respond to its customers, the county Department of Planning and Land Use has introduced its "Quick Business Counter" to specifically handle building permits that can be completed in 15 minutes or less. The service is offered from 8 to 10 a.m. weekdays and is expected to reduce wait times for customers whose permits should not take long to complete. The quick-counters will handle only permit business that can be taken care of in about 15 minutes, such as electrical, plumbing and mechanical service upgrades, septic to sewer conversions, copper repiping, and replacing water heaters.

Now Is Time For Fire Readiness

Fire season is now year-round for San Diego County. Preparations should begin now to avoid a repeat of the tragic wildfires that occurred in October 2005 and 2007. To help property owners, a special website is serving as a clearinghouse for information pertaining to emergency preparedness. To learn what you should be doing, visit www.ReadySanDiego.org.



CLUB GRANT TO FIX BATHROOMS

Surrounded by cheering youth, Keith Padgett, chief executive officer for the Boys & Girls Clubs of San Dieguito, receives a Third District community projects grant worth \$35,000 presented by staff liaison Mark Olson, representing Vice Chairwoman Pam Slater-Price. The youth organization will use the grant to upgrade the aged bathroom facilities at its Grisent branch in Encinias.

County To Promote 'Staycations'

Based on a recommendation from Vice Chairwoman Pam Slater-Price, the county is looking into implementing an Environmental Education and Passport Program that will challenge families to visit and explore the existing parks and preserves.

There are many good reasons why families are looking into "staycations," she says.

"Staycations are quickly becoming a common word in the American vocabulary. This is a vacation that is taken close to home due to current economic circumstances," she explains. "Staycations are increasingly becoming the best option for families impacted by the recent economic

uncertainties. As spring and summer approach, and families starting thinking about a viable alternative for an economically efficient vacation, the county's parks and recreation network provides a great opportunity."

Staying home to check out San Diego County's myriad natural assets makes for an inexpensive but healthy vacation, offers Vice Chairwoman Slater-Price for families looking for a getaway that is easy on the budget.

"By delivering a user-friendly environmental education and passport program, families will be encouraged to enjoy and learn more about the local natural, historical and cultural resources," she says.



Vice Chairwoman Pam Slater-Price (left) joins host Pat Launer to announce the winners of the 12th annual Patté Awards for theater excellence in San Diego. Vice

PATTÉ AWARDS



Chairwoman Slater-Price was an honoree herself, receiving the honor for "Patté Theater Angel." Honorees (right) posed for a picture during the dinner festivities.

AROUND AND ABOUT IN THE THIRD DISTRICT

NATURE CENTER MAKES ITS DEBUT

More than 200 people turned out to see the new Nature Center at the San Elijo Lagoon Preserve. The two-story building (below right), features interactive displays and high-tech exhibits that allow visitors to experience the wetland habitat while learning about its ecosystem. The \$5.6 million center is made of recycled materials and features irrigated roof plants, solar panels and recycled water. Vice Chairwoman Pam Slater-Price helped fund the center through community project grants. During an open house that took place following the Jan. 31 ribbon-cutting, park rangers (below) showed off a variety of the animals and birds that make the 915-acre preserve their home. The lagoon features 300 species of birds, 26 species of mammals, 20 species of fish and 300 species of plants.



AROUND THE THIRD DISTRICT

RATING

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tioned to handle an economic and revenue slowdown.”

This validation of the county’s management should help alleviate some of the fears that follow the repeated news announcements of layoffs and closures, explains Vice Chairwoman Slater-Price.

“The economic downturn is real and we will need to make additional changes,” she says.

“For example, the County of San Diego will need to adjust its budget to account for the decline in tax revenue. This is an important action to adjust to the changes in the region’s economy.”

Vice Chairwoman Slater-Price also added the county is deeply concerned about state cuts for mandated programs. “This is a catastrophe waiting to happen,” she predicts.

“We are the stewards of the public trust and the public treasury.”



Vice Chairwoman Pam Slater-Price (left) recognizes Encinitas Mayor Maggie Houlihan (waving), as state Assemblyman Martin Garrick and Solana Beach Councilwoman Lesa Heebner look on during the ceremonies marking the new opening of the \$5.6 million Nature Center at the San Elijo Lagoon Preserve.

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“The Nature Center reflects the environment it shares,” she explains. “The San Elijo Lagoon represents one of the few wetland habitats still thriving in Southern California. By incorporating the latest green building standards, such as the use of irrigated roof plants, the facility blends into the watershed. This preserve is home to more than 700 species of plants and animals, many of which are either threatened or endan-

gered. Our children now have a place to study to the coastal wetlands ecosystem and understand its importance in their lives, and why it is important to take care of this resource.”

The 915-acre preserve has 5 miles of hiking trails, a self-guided nature walk, and handicapped-accessible boardwalk that offers panoramic views.

Vice Chairwoman Slater-Price led the effort to rebuild the Nature Center, contributing funding through Third District community projects grants.

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